



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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TENNESSEE CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS CONTINUE TO CLIMB *MORE THAN \$440 MILLION COLLECTED FOR CHILDREN*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— The Tennessee Department of Human Services continues to see an increase in child support collections over previous years. Collections for the 2005 State Fiscal Year totaled more than \$444 million. This is a 65 percent increase in collections since 2001. Technology and improved enforcement tools have contributed to the increase in collections. DHS relies on programs such as wage garnishment, Financial Institution Data Match, IRS tax intercept and Tennessee Lottery offsets to make sure that children are receiving their court-ordered child support.

“Our child support enforcement division is working hard each day to ensure that children are receiving the support they are owed,” said DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge. “Parents who willfully refuse to support their children will be subject to any enforcement tool available to the Department, because there is little doubt that reliable payments of child support help improve the lives of children.”

The federal IRS tax intercept program grew nearly 10 percent over the previous year. More than \$32.5 million in tax refunds were seized during the 2005 State Fiscal Year and sent to the families who were not receiving their support. Financial Institution Data Match is another tool DHS uses to collect overdue support. From May through July of this year, more than \$150,000 was collected and distributed. And since February 2004, more than \$104,000 in Tennessee Lottery funds were collected for children whose parents are playing the lottery but not paying their child support.

There are currently 229,000 cases with child support orders in Tennessee.

Collections for the last five state fiscal years include: SFY 2001 / \$ 269 million; SFY 2002 \$319 million; SFY 2003 \$362 million; SFY 2004 \$412 million; SFY 2005 \$444 million.

All judicial districts across the state have shown an increase in their collections over last year. Knox County, the 6th judicial district, leads the state with a nearly 19 percent increase in collections over 2004. Total child support collections there were nearly \$26 million.

For more information on the Tennessee Child Support Program, visit:
<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/child-support.htm>

The Federal Offset Program: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/newhire/fop/fop.htm>

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